

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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No. 11

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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AN EASTER SONG.

A song of sunshine through the rain,
Of spring across the snow,
A balm to heal the hurts of pain,
A peace surpassing woe.
Lift up your heads, ye sorrowing ones,
And be ye glad of heart;
For Calvary and Easter Day—
Earth's saddest day and gladdest day—
Were just one day apart!

With shudders of despair and loss
The world's deep heart was wrung,
As lifted high upon His cross
The Lord of glory hung.
Yet all the while the glad, near sun
Made ready its swift dart,
And Calvary and Easter Day—
The darkest day and brightest day—
Were just one day apart!

Oh, when the strife of tongues is loud,
And the heart of hope beats low,
When the prophets prophesy of ill,
And the mourners come and go,
In this sure thought let us abide,
And keep and stay our heart,
That Calvary and Easter Day—
Earth's heaviest day and happiest day—
Were but one day apart!

—*Susan Coolidge.*

AN EASTER SERMON.

To Saint Paul, the resurrection meant an experience in this present life through which we become conscious of a vital force within ourselves over which death has no power. Hence he spoke of the members of the churches as already risen with Christ through faith. The Christ who had gone out of sight was still with them as a spiritual influence. In the apostle's thought the resurrection had taken away the veil which usually hides the heavenly world from mortal sight, and had made this world and that as one to the spiritual consciousness. Thus he regarded the resurrection, not as a violation of the laws of nature, but as a revelation of a law of the soul which had hitherto remained undiscovered. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "Adam" here represents the merely physical element in human life, which is subject to the known laws of change, decay, and death. Thus as Adam died, so all will die. But the Christ represents the principle of spiritual energy in the soul which death cannot touch, and just as it had no power over him, so it cannot have power over his disciples. Therefore his resurrection illustrates the universal law that death is nothing to the soul, save only a step in its progress, the means of its promotion from one class to a higher class in God's school of life.

The Greek word, which is translated "resurrection," means ascent—a going up, not a coming back, but a going up. In the writings of Paul it often signifies the rising of the soul from the conditions and limitations of life in the material body to the higher life and larger opportunities of the heavenly world. And the essential thing in the resurrection of Jesus was not an empty tomb, but the fact that in spite of the death upon the cross he was still alive. Death had possessed no power over him. He had broken its bonds, escaped its grasp, and risen into a

higher state of being; and under the conditions of this higher existence he was able to visit his friends and companions of earth to teach and guide them as of old, when still in the bodily form. Thus his resurrection was not simply an event which took place three days after the crucifixion, but a continuous experience in which he was able to come to his disciples and pour into their hearts and minds mighty currents of spiritual life and love, truth and power. The questions, How he rose? What kind of a body he had? By what means he manifested himself to his friends? What became of the material body?—all such questions, although of great interest to some people, can never be answered. All that we know with certainty is the fact that Jesus reappeared to his disciples a number of times and in such manner as to convince them that he had subdued “the king of terrors” both for himself and for them; and that he would continue forever as the guide, inspirer, and head of the Church. This was the sublime conviction that filled their hearts with divine courage, inspired their minds with spiritual power, and sent them forth to preach “the good news of the grace of God” to all nations.

Without doubt the resurrection of Jesus is surrounded with mystery—such impenetrable mystery that increasingly large numbers of thoughtful people find themselves unable to believe it at all. They think it a violation of the laws of nature, and therefore impossible. And it certainly would be an infringement of natural law if by rising from the dead it is meant that the lifeless body was resuscitated. This would be opposed to all human experience. But there is nothing to show that by the resurrection the apostles thought that Jesus had come back from the spiritual world to reinhabit his cast-off body of flesh and blood. Moreover, if this is what his rising means, it avails nothing. It does not prove the immortality of the soul, because in an earthly body Jesus would still have remained subject to the laws of physical life, and therefore would die again, soon or late. But the disciples believed that their Master was entirely freed from the laws and limitations of physical existence. Thus they said, “We know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again: death has power over him no longer” (Romans vi. 9). If he had only reappeared in his former body, as Lazarus is said to have returned, then, like Lazarus, he would die again, and the resur-

rection would reveal nothing concerning the higher life beyond the grave.

To Martha, weeping for her dead brother, Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” The sorrow-stricken sister had always supposed that the resurrection was something she would experience “at the last day”; but Jesus thought of it as the predominance of a spiritual element in the soul over which death had no power. And yet, strange to say, the vast majority of Christian people to this day take Martha’s view in preference to that of Jesus. According to the almost universal belief of the Church, the resurrection is a coming back to this bodily life, a rising out of the grave at the last day. This view, however, is in direct opposition to the plain teaching of Christ that there is no death for those who have his faith in God, and whose souls are inspired with his conviction of kinship to the heavenly Father. Thus he says, “He who believes in me, though he die, he will live; and every one who is alive and believes in me will never die at all” (John xi. 25 and 26).

What, then, is the lesson of the resurrection of Jesus for us? It is this: that life is stronger than death; that the soul is not conquered when the body dies, but through the shadows of the grave rises to a higher and better state of existence; and that heaven is not far away above the sky, but a world of spiritual life and love and power right around us here.

Help us, our Father, to keep the door of the soul open at all times to the incoming of the Holy Spirit, that we may share with Jesus in the experience which belongs to all thy children, of rising, even while on earth, into the life of love and truth and earnest endeavor that knows no death, but grows fuller and stronger with every added year, until at length it bursts forth in the power and beauty of the heavenly world. Amen.

Alexander T. Bowser.

THE STILL HOUR.

OUR DEAD.

Beside my dead I knelt for prayer,
And felt a presence as I prayed,
And it was Jesus standing there.
He smiled, “Be not afraid.”

“Lord, thou hast conquered death, I know;
Restore again to life,” I said,
“This one who died an hour ago.”
He smiled, “She is not dead.”

"Asleep, then, as thyself didst say:
Yet thou canst lift the lids that keep
Her prisoned eyes from mine away."
He smiled, "She doth not sleep."

"Nay, then, though haply she doth wake,
And look upon some fairer dawn,
Restore her to my heart that aches."
He smiled, "She is not gone."

"Alas! too well I know my loss,
Nor hope again my joy to touch
Until the stream of death I cross."
He smiled, "There is none such."

"Yet our beloved seem so far
The while we yearn to have them near,
Albeit with thee we trust they are."
He smiled, "And I am here."

"Dear Lord, how shall we know that they
Still walk unseen with us and thee,
Nor sleep, nor wander far away?"
He smiled, "Abide in me."

—Christina Rossetti.

THE LAST PRAYER.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe
in God, believe also in me.

... I go to prepare a place for you.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up
his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the
hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy
Son also may glorify thee. . . .

And now I am no more in the world, but
these are in the world, and I come to thee.
Holy Father, keep through thine own name
those whom thou hast given me, that they
may be one as we are. . . .

I pray not that thou shouldst take them
out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep
them from the evil.

They are not of the world, even as I am
not of the world.

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy
word is truth. . . .

Neither pray I for these alone, but for
them also which shall believe on me through
their word;

That they all may be one; as thou, Father,
art in me, and I in thee, that they also may
be one in us: that the world may believe
that thou hast sent me. (JOHN xiv., xvii.)

Words that never grow old! Springs of
of comfort that never fail! The troubled
heart pants for the comfort they give. His
spirit breathes upon the heart.

All who have felt the dawning of a higher

life in their souls know what prayer is.
Prayer rises into trust, so prayer and trust
are one. When first we long for the Chris-
tian life, how natural the cry, "Father, help
me." When sorrow for sin is waked, "Father
forgive me." When great joy comes, making
the heart glad, "Our Father, I thank thee!"
Prayer opens the door of that angel ministry
at Gethsemane, and it lets angels of comfort
into sorrowing hearts still. Gethsemane
might lower and Calvary rear its cross before
Jesus, but the will of his Father was his will.
The Christ-spirit qualifies all its asking with,
"Thy will, not mine, be done." Prayer is
the child clasping his Father's hand, looking
into his Father's face, warming himself in his
Father's smile, asking nothing but to be
closer, closer, closer to Him.—*Leaflets for
Lent, W. B. Tilden.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to
Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.]

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive
"Black Beauty" address Miss Langmaid,
71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.

Any one desiring school-books please apply
to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park,
Roxbury, Mass.

The following books are offered by the
Second Church, Branch, Salem. Address
Miss Decker, 4 Mt. Vernon Street, Salem.
"Socialism and Collectivism," an essay;
"Was there a Second Isaiah?" Rev. T. E.
Bartlet; "Robert Elsmere."

German.

"Grammar," Eysenbach; "Deutsche Gram-
matik," Winchebach; "Methode Berlitz,"
zweiter Buch.

French.

"La Langue Française," Paul Bercy; "La
Fille de Roland," Drame; "Recitation à
l'Usage des Classes de Français," "L'Art
d'Intéresser en Classe," Bernard.

The Cambridge branch offers the follow-
ing books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20
Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass. "Our Vil-
lage," Mitford; "The Cardinal's Snuff-box";
"Life and Letters of Fredrika Bremer";
"Eliana," Charles Lamb; "Two Pictures";

"The Philosophy of Rhetoric"; Emerson's "Conduct of Life"; "The Birds' Christmas Carol"; "Christian Ballads," A. C. Coxe; "Life and Letters of Goethe," Herman Grimm; "Modern Painters," Ruskin; "The Creoles of Louisiana," Cable; "Literature in Letters"; "A Roundabout Journey," Warner; "Home Ballads," Whittier; "Foregleams of Immortality," E. H. Sears; "Milestones on our Life," Quincy; "Mendelssohn's Letters from Italy and Switzerland"; "A Painter's Camp," Hamerton; "The Prose Writers of Germany"; "Memoir of John Lothrop Motley," O. W. Holmes; "Letters of Eugenie de Guérin"; "In the Levant," Warner; "Ronald Carnaqua"; "The Old Garden, and Other Verses," Margaret DeLand; "History of Civilization," Guizot.

Juvenile.

"Fairy Tales from Brentano"; *Chatterbox*, 1888; "Happy Children"; *Babyland*; *Wide Awake*; "Tutti-frutti"; "Merry Little People"; "Cat's Cradle, Rhymes and Pictures for Children"; "Old-fashioned Fairy Tales"; "Galapoff, the Talking Pony"; "Legends of the Red Children"; "Little Miss Phoebe Gay"; "The Story of Little Jane and Me"; "Ednah and her Brother"; "The Lonesomest Doll"; "A Girl of To-day."

The Marlboro Branch offers the following books. Address Miss Della M. Frye, 207 Pleasant Street, Marlboro, Mass. "Tale of Two Cities"; "Dombey and Son"; "Ivanhoe," Scott; "Romola," George Eliot; "Wonder Book," Hawthorne; "Rubáiyát," Omar Kháyyám; "Essay on Man," Pope; "Cones for the Camp Fire," Murray; "Elements of Chemistry"; French grammars and readers; Music books and sheet music; kindergarten magazines and popular educators for teachers. "The Life and Letters of Frances, Baroness Bunsen," A. J. C. Hare.

REQUESTS.

[Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.]

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I desire to become a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange and receive good reading for myself and school-books for my little stepson. My family consists of my

husband, my stepson, my own baby girl, and myself. We live several miles from a railroad, and there is no library near me. My husband has moved away from the neighborhood in which I was raised, and it is seldom that I am with the dear home folks and friends I loved so well. A portion of the time I have poor health, and am oft-times sad and lonely. I trust that the kind Cheerful Letter friends will send me some books, magazines, or any interesting reading. And for my stepson I hope you can send some small readers and other books suitable for a small boy. Address (Mrs.) Bettie Nolen, R. F. D. No. 1, Floyd, Virginia.

2. I have just had the pleasure of becoming a member of the society, and now I shall be glad of any reading matter which I may receive, as I am very fond of reading. I will gladly pass on to others what is sent to me. I shall be glad of copies of any of the popular magazines and of any new books. I have received very little reading of any kind. (Miss) Corinne B. Coleman, R. F. D. No. 2, Sandidges, Virginia.

3. Would be very glad to have the *Youth's Companion*. The literature already sent me has been a great help. (Mrs.) S. M. Hogan, Choudrant, Louisiana.

4. Would any of the kind friends send me the *Woman's Home Journal* for 1904? I will gladly pass on any reading that is sent to me. (Miss) Ida Bentley, Hereford, Texas.

5. "Historical Collections of the Great West," containing narratives of the most important events of Western history, by Henry Howe, and published in 1855, is asked for by (Miss) Bessie Wirick, Lloyd, Florida.

6. John W. Kirby, Lilesville, North Carolina, would like "Snow-bound."

7. As I have moved to my new home, I thought I would inform you and thank those who have remembered me in the past. I would like to have reading for young people, as there are a great many children in my neighborhood who need something to read, such as Sunday-school papers or the *Youth's Companion*. (Mrs.) Ada V. Wann, Wannville, Alabama.

8. Miss Sadie G. Baird, Randolph, Virginia, asks for "Audrey," "Little Women," and "Little Lord Fauntleroy."

9. Mrs. Martha W. Guy, Germantown, Kentucky, asks for *Harper's Young People* and two pieces of music, "Down on the Farm" and "Veteran Joe."

10. I thank all who have been so kind as to remember me with reading. I would be glad to be remembered with a few books. I have often wished for "Barriers Burned Away," by E. P. Roe; also any of Rosa N. Carey's works. My little girl wishes for story books. I will share all I receive with others. The books and magazines sent me have been read until some of them will not hold together. Will the dear friend who is sending me *The Cheerful Letter* send it to Critz, Virginia, instead of Verano. Mrs. George Brown, Critz, Patrick County, Virginia.

11. My husband is pastor of two churches in this section. I would be so glad to receive good books which I could pass around among our young people, who do not read as much as they should. We have no Sunday-school libraries here, and no public library, so they have no access for good books. I would like to have the *Youth's Companion* for my little girls, and am very anxious indeed for a standard dictionary for our study. May *The Cheerful Letter* continue to bless and brighten lonely and needy lives. Yours with appreciation, Mrs. M. B. Reams, Bay View, Virginia.

12. Mrs. Clara Brown, Tom Bean, Texas, will be grateful for either the *Delineator*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, or the *Youth's Companion* for 1905.

13. Guy Hamilton, Langton, New Mexico, will be glad of any magazines.

14. Anise Beverly, Wadesboro, North Carolina, asks for Tennyson's "Poems."

15. Mrs. E. L. Mahe, Shuff, Virginia, asks for suitable reading for her three children, ages thirteen, eleven, and nine years.

16. Miss Rosa Cook, Brown's Summit, North Carolina, R. F. D. No. 2, an invalid, will be pleased with good reading.

17. Mrs. Guy Whitten, Clinton, Maine, will be very glad to receive the *New England Homestead*, "Swiss Family Robinson," or anything pertaining to new inventions on machinery and electrical works.

18. F. H. Gorham, Macdonald, Arizona, will be pleased with any reading.

19. Ernest W. Heath, Comfort, Idaho, will be glad of any magazines.

20. Any reading matter will be appreciated by H. C. Blain, Macdonald, Arizona.

21. Mrs. Hattie D. Wood, Mansville, Indian Territory, is now recovering from a long and serious illness. She will be grateful for reading, and especially asks for recitation books for her two little children.

22. Mrs. J. F. Andrews, Madison, North Carolina, R. F. D. No. 3, a widow with a girl, eight years of age, will be thankful for suitable reading.

23. Chautauquan text-books are asked for by Mrs. Lulu L. Shearer, Black Mountain, North Carolina.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

CORRECTING FAULTS: THE RIGHT WAY.

In a few minutes the girls heard the sound of wheels coming. At the same moment they heard Johnny say to George,—

"Here's somebody coming, George."

Johnny was afraid it might be somebody coming to give them another scolding for pelting the frogs.

"I don't care," said George.

The wagon was now turning down toward the watering-place, and the girls could see that there was quite an agreeable looking young man in it. He was well dressed, and he had a frank, open countenance. As soon as the horse came to the margin of the water, he said to the boys,—

"Boys, will one of you be good enough to unhook the check-rein, so that my horse can drink?"

The boys threw down their stones, and ran at once to the horse. George, being the tallest, unhooked the rein, and the horse began to drink.

"I knew you were clever fellows the first minute I put eyes on you," said the young man. "Now jump up here into my wagon. I want you up here."

The boys immediately scrambled up into the wagon. The young man made room for them upon the seat. As soon as they were comfortably settled, George looked up at the young man and asked,—

"What do you want of us?"

"Oh, only to have your company up here while my horse is drinking," said he. "What is there on the pond that you were looking at when I came along?"

"Frogs," said George.

"Pond-lilies," said Johnny. Johnny seemed to have an instinctive feeling that it was better to turn the conversation toward the pond-lilies than to the frogs.

"Would you like some of those pond-lilies?" asked the young man.

"Yes, indeed," exclaimed both the boys.

"Then we will drive out and get some," replied the young man. "You are not afraid to go with me, are you?"

"No, indeed!" said the boys.

"Then scramble over behind the seats," said the young man, "and I will drive out there and back you down among the lily pads, and you can get as many lilies as you like."

So the boys climbed over and around the seat into the back part of the wagon; and the young man, after driving down some way into the water, which was very shallow for some distance from the shore, took a great sweep, so as to bring the horse round with his head toward the land, and then backed the wagon down among the lily pads, so that the boys, by reaching over the end of the wagon could gather the lilies.

The Lesson Learned.

Mary Osborne and Augustina were so much interested in watching the operation of backing the wagon into the water that they forgot their desire to keep themselves concealed, and went down to the margin of the pond, and there stood in full view, looking on while the boys were gathering the lilies.

"It is William Darricut," said Augustina to Mary Osborne, in a whisper.

"Hush!" said Mary Osborne.

"George," said Johnny, stopping suddenly, and pointing to a little distance off over the water. "Look! There's a frog! See!"

"Yes," said young Darricut. "He is sunning himself. We won't hurt you, old fellow. We won't even frighten you if we can help it. Will we, boys?"

"No," said the boys.

"If I had only a crust of bread here," said William Darricut, "I would feed him with the crumbs."

The boys looked at the frog, but said nothing.

"I wish he would come here and let us

see him swim," continued the young man. "You don't know how *elegantly* he can swim. The best way, in fact, for a boy to learn to swim is to watch how one of these big pond-lily frogs pushes backward with his hind paddles, and then draws his legs up to push again. And yet I have known some boys to take pleasure in tormenting them and pelting them with stones. That is a bad sign. It is a sign of an ugly fellow to like to pelt frogs in a pond."

"George," said the young man, suddenly interrupting himself, "would you like to drive the wagon up out of the water?"

"Yes," said George, eagerly.

"Then give the little fellow your lilies to hold, and scramble back over here."

George and Johnny both climbed along the side of the wagon back to the seat, and then, after Johnny had taken all the pond lilies, George, with great pride and satisfaction, drove the wagon out to dry land. In the mean time the two girls had gone back into their place of retreat without having been observed.

As soon as the wagon reached the land the boys got out of it, and William Darricut, after bidding them good-bye, drove away. The two boys stood a moment on the beach at the place where the wagon had left them without saying a word. Presently George began to push away with his feet the pile of stones which he had collected for ammunition, so as to scatter them about the beach. Johnny immediately began to do the same with his pile of stones.

"That was a good fellow, wasn't he, George?" said he.

"Yes," said George. "He was a real good fellow."

Here there was another pause. George seemed to be feeling in the bottom of his pockets.

Presently he said, "You have not got any crumbs of bread or anything in your pockets, have you, Johnny?"

"No," said Johnny, beginning at the same time to feel in his pockets. "I don't think I have."

"Because, if we only had some crumbs," said George, "we might give them to the frogs."

"I'll give them my cake," said Mary Osborne in an eager whisper to Augustina. She still had her cake in her hand, though Augustina had eaten hers. She immediately left the peep-hole windows and went down around the rocks by the little pathway near the

water, followed closely by Augustina, and came out suddenly into view before the boys. They seemed amazed at this unexpected apparition.

"Here is a cake you may have to feed the frogs with," she said, at the same time holding out the cake toward them. . . .

William Darricut was a college student, at home for a vacation. Mary Osborne knew him very well; and, on meeting him a few days after this occurrence, she told him about seeing him help the boys gather the pond-lilies, and also about the boys pelting the frogs, and about the remonstrance which the other man had addressed to them before he came, and the little effect which his reasoning had produced.

William Darricut was very much interested in this account, and he asked Mary Osborne what the boys did and said after he came away. When she told him about their trying to find crumbs in their pockets to feed the frogs with, he seemed very much amused, and laughed quite heartily.

Mary Osborne said that she wondered how the boys could go on throwing stones at the frogs after what the other gentleman had told him.

"Ah!" replied William Darricut. "He did not go to work the right way. You can't make children feel right or even think right by the force of reasoning. They act from *sympathy* and *imitation*. You must act toward them in such a manner as to make them *like* you, and then just tell them how *you* think and feel, and they will think and feel the same."

Mary Osborne remembered this principle, and this was the lesson that she learned while she was at the boarding-school, which afterward was of so much benefit to her when she became a Sunday-school teacher.—*Jacob Abbott, in "Mary Osborne."*

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

THE FACTORY BILL: VICTORY AT LAST.

The great struggle for the Ten Hours' Bill was drawing near its end, and, by the irony of fate, the victory was to be achieved while Lord Ashley was out of Parliament. The winter of 1846-47 had seen him in Lancashire, attending meetings in every large town, and adopting all possible means to support the efforts which Mr. Fielden was to resume in Parliament in the ensuing season. Everywhere Lord Ashley met with an enthusiastic reception.

There is a natural and mournful ring in the following words from the Diary:—

"*February 10th.*—Factory Bill is under discussion in the House of Commons. I lingered in the lobby; had not spirit to enter the House; should have been nervously excited to reply, and grieved by inability to do so.

"*March 1st.*—Intense anxiety about Factory Bill. I dream of it by day and by night, and work as though I had charge of the bill.

"*May 18th.*—Bill passed second reading in House of Lords by 53 to 11. How can we praise thee, or thank thee, O Lord? One step more, and all is safe.

"*June 1st.*—News that the Factory Bill has just passed the third reading. I am humbled that my heart is not bursting with thankfulness to Almighty God, that I can find breath and sense to express my joy. What reward shall we give unto the Lord for all the benefits he hath conferred upon us! God, in his mercy, prosper the work, and grant that these operatives may receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord! Praised be the Lord, praised be the Lord, in Christ Jesus!" . . .

This great victory was received throughout the country with intense enthusiasm. The rejoicings in the manufacturing districts were such as had never been seen before. Lord Ashley and Mr. Fielden were greeted with ovations wherever they went: many of the mill-owners welcomed the change, and arranged for festivities in honor of the occasion. Medals were struck in commemoration of the event, and the queen was graciously pleased to receive, at the hands of Lord Ashley, one of these medals, sent to her by the factory operatives.

For forty years the subject had been before the world, and for fourteen years Lord Ashley had been working incessantly for the boon now granted.

After a long and wearisome course, the bill was passed, and received the royal assent on July 26, 1850. It reduced the legal working day for all young persons and women to the time between six in the morning and six in the evening, with one and a half hours for meals. This permitted ten and a half hours' work for five days in the week: on Saturdays no protected person was to work after two.

The principle established by the Ten Hours' Bill has had an effect, the importance of which it is difficult to overestimate, and, owing to the perseverance of Lord Shaftes-

bury, that principle has been extended, until to-day we have "a complete, minute, and voluminous code for the protection of labor; buildings must be kept pure of effluvia; dangerous machinery must be fenced; children and young persons must not clean it while in motion; their hours are not only limited, but fixed; continuous employment must not exceed a given number of hours, varying with the trade, but prescribed by the law in given cases; a suitable number of holidays is imposed; the children must go to school, and the employer must every week have a certificate to that effect; if an accident happens, notice must be sent to the proper authorities; special provisions are made for bake-houses, for lace-making, for collieries, and for a whole schedule of other special callings; for the due enforcement and vigilant supervision of this immense host of minute prescriptions there is an immense host of inspectors, certifying surgeons, and other authorities whose business it is to 'speed and post o'er land and ocean' in restless guardianship of every kind of labor, from that of the woman who plaits straw at her cottage door, to the miner who descends into the bowels of the earth, and the seaman who conveys the fruits and materials of universal industry to and fro between the remotest parts of the globe!"—*The Life of Lord Shaftesbury, by Hodder.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THREE SPARROWS THAT LIVE IN A HOUSE.

I.

I know a house in Brooklyn which is a sort of birds' hospital, where are living more birds than people, and where all wounded and suffering feathered creatures find shelter and comfort.

While I am writing this story there are, among the other birds, three English sparrows, street birds, that had been hurt, and rescued from cats and cruel boys, and taken care of till they were well.

One of these birds is sentimental. He wants to be cuddled all the time. He is so grateful for his comfortable home that he is unhappy if he cannot be with one of the family who have been so kind to him.

Most tame birds are satisfied if they can perch on a shoulder or arm of the person they like, but not so this sparrow. He wants to be held in a warm hand or snuggled up within the arm; and he is so determined

to get into his favorite place that, when the family want to do something besides hold a bird, they have to roll him up in a shawl and lay him in a snug corner of a bed or chair.

The thing he likes best of all is to be taken into bed, and he cannot fly to go there himself. So in the early morning, long before any one, except a bird, wants to get up or even to be awakened, he will begin his loud squawks, and never stop till one of his kind mistresses gets up, takes him in her hand, and holds him shut up in it under her cheek. There he is happy and still, and she can sleep as long as she likes. Did ever a bird have so droll a sleeping-place?

The second queer sparrow was almost dead when brought in from the street. He recovered his health entirely; but he, too, can never fly, so he is obliged to live in a house. This bird is not sentimental—far from it! He is very fond of eating, perhaps even a little greedy. And, besides being fond of his dinner, he seems to like a joke.

He always insists on going to meals, for he understands the dinner-bell as well as any one. He squawks and calls and makes a commotion till he is carried to the table and set down upon it. Then he runs about, tastes everything, makes up his mind what he likes best, and eats as much as he wants of it.

He is fond of a joke, as I said, and he shows it in this way: the thing he likes best to eat is butter, and after taking a bit he always wants to wipe his beak as birds do. The place he chooses to use for this purpose is the coat-sleeve of the head of the family. Grease spots on the coat-sleeve are too much for the most amiable man to endure, so the bird was early made to understand he must not do it, but must use the tablecloth or the edge of a dish.

The clever bird knew what was meant, for this family talk so much to their pets that they learn to understand a great deal. They seem to know perfectly well what is said to them, and what they must not do. The English sparrow is one of the sharpest-witted of birds, and he plainly understood—as his manner showed—that he must not use a coat-sleeve for a napkin.

But English sparrows have no notion of giving up anything they like, and this one is not only obstinate like his fellows, but has a spice of mischief besides. So now, while taking his meals as usual with the family, he slyly watches his chance. When the coat-wearer is particularly busy and has

forgotten for a moment to be on guard, the saucy bird will thrust his beak into the butter, hop silently but quickly to the coveted sleeve, wipe the beak, and dash away before he can be touched, and then, perhaps, chuckle over the joke the rest of the day.

II.

The third sparrow living in this house is, however, the most astonishing one. In this protected home, where food and drink never fail and no work is needed to secure them, where street fun and street dangers and domestic affairs and all other sources of work or play are denied him, he has turned his active mind to the improvement of his talents, and, with two canaries for companions, has learned their song.

I spent some hours in the house one day for the purpose of hearing this wonderful thing,—an English sparrow singing like a canary. He was shy about showing off, but I kept very quiet in the other parlor while his mistress coaxed him with talk and piano music to sing. Before long, finding himself unable to resist, he dropped the ordinary street squawks, with which he had, been regaling us, long enough to sing several times. He poured out with great freedom all the warbles and quavers of the canary song, including a remarkable trill, and he did it better than the canaries who taught him, because his natural voice is better than theirs, being richer and fuller, and not so shrill. One who heard him without seeing him would never think of the singer being anything but an unusually fine singer of the canary family.

Think of it! A common wild English sparrow saved from a violent death in March, and by October singing a fellow-captive's song better than the canary can sing it himself. Perhaps this accomplished bird, if sent out into the streets as a missionary, might teach the others to do the same. We could forgive the English sparrows a good deal if they would fill our streets with song.

When at last I had to leave the house, I went into the back parlor where the bird lives, without canaries at present, in a cage among house plants in a sunny window, and looked at him. Plenty of food and water, and no struggle for life in the dust of the street, had given his coat rich and pure coloring, so that he is really as beautiful as it is possible for one of his tribe to be. Nothing less than seeing him could convince me that the fine song I had heard could have come

from a common English sparrow.—“*True Bird Stories*,” Olive Thorne Miller.

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

BOSTON, April 27, 1835.

My dear James,—Thomas was highly delighted with your letter, as he has attempted to express in his answer. Weariness overcame him before he got very far, so he dictated while I wrote for him. I have just been reading your letter in the *Observer*, which I should think would be productive of subscribers to the *Messenger*; but whether W. E. effects his object is yet a problem: I confess I doubt it much.

You have received mother's letter about an exchange with John Sargent. What do you think of it? It cannot be an *exchange*, to be sure; but it might do for an expedient by which you might visit home. Grandfather is very infirm, very feeble, indeed, and I wish you might see him this summer. His mind occasionally gives warnings of wandering. Sometimes for several minutes he is like one talking in his sleep, and then again he is bright and cheerful as before. Mother has gone there to stay. She is by no means well yet. I am in town with Thomas, who will finish his term at school the last of May, and then we shall both go to Newton, after which I shall go to Groton, Greenfield, and Lancaster if I can find an escort; for that beautiful town I am resolved to see. I am much obliged for your criticisms upon my views in Mount Auburn. They have enlightened me exceedingly. You are the first person who has said anything about them more than “sweet” and “beautiful.” If I can afford to do some more, I will act according to *your* thought, which will not be troublesome. I did the views at my own expense, and I rather think it will prove so. It is true, I can ill afford to make a present to the public; but I have the satisfaction of knowing that I did not mean to.

William Eliot has just been here to see me. I am struck with the responsible look he has acquired in his six months' struggle. It is hardly inferior to that which you brought with you last year. He grieves me by saying that you will not return this summer, and surprises me by saying that you all expect mother to come on to the West this spring. Have you not received our letters wherein we explain that that affair is given up?

Mother is scarcely well enough for such an excursion at present. She is hoping to see you here.

James, I think you infer too much from my Transcendental communications. I had no idea of creating such a disturbance in your mind, and yet now I see how it is. I only sought to refresh your spirit by letting you see that such things still are which otherwise you might forget. I think the nucleus is not yet formed. The particles are yet vibrating. Natalia is at Plymouth, the Abbé at Concord. Jarno may still remain at his post till he receives a warning that he is wanted. But I do not like this cast of character. You are no more like the cold-blooded Jarno than Miss Jackson is like Natalia. What do you think of this description of her which was given by Mr. Emerson,—"an incarnation of faith, an eye looking perpetually upward." That is not Natalia. However, she is perhaps Natalia if you mean by that the top. But this supernal coterie meets but seldom. However, other working spiritualists there are who may be found in their place every day, doing their duty there where it is; for, as you truly say, Faithfulness elevates the Commonplace, while self-seeking can degrade the Noble. This is true, therefore I want you to be here. I rather desire to see you true and faithful to that which you have chosen—mind, I do not pretend to judge of *circumstances*, only principles—and shall never be so happy as when the voice in your heart says, "Arise, get thee back among thy kindred to thy home which thou knowest of old." Mr. Emerson shall send you the "Sartor," and then you will have the whole matter. The coterie study this little tome night and day; and, if they should swear, it would be by the "Everlasting Yes" or the "Everlasting No." They keep the three copies in constant use, and Mr. Emerson said the other day, when I saw him a moment, that he could not then give me one for you, and that he almost feared he should have to say to you, like the man who lent his bellows, "You may come and blow at my fire as much as you please,"—"Come and read in my library." He shall not escape so; for it was a voluntary offer to send it to you and you need it, which they do not. Half of them don't know what it means.

By the way, there is a Miss Mary Emerson, aunt to Mr. Emerson, who is dying to find out what Transcendentalism is. She cannot understand it, they say, because she

is so completely one, as the eye cannot see itself. Well, they told her, "Now you will know when you have seen Miss Jackson. Rejoice, for you will see a real Transcendentalist." But she was still at fault. "And is this, too, a Transcendentalist? Shall I ever know what it means? Is it not all a shadow? If there are any rules of faith and practice which transcend the Christian, let the world know of it."

Mr. Francis begs you will put your review of Norton ("Defence of Carlyle") in your magazine. He says the lapse of time is nothing at all. Every one remembers the article as much as if it were just published. He rather takes pleasure in the idea of Mr. Norton getting a good shaking.

The posthumous works of Goethe I have inquired after, but cannot find. H. and B. seem to know nothing about the matter. I shall send you a list of subscribers* which mother has obtained. She was quite relieved when you wrote that you should expect her to get twenty. She thought about two hundred and fifty was her portion.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Miss Kate L. Watson, Post-office Box 57, Worcester, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address *plainly* (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

TWO OLD GAMES.

A good game to play with a "magic wand" is "A spot on the carpet." Any stick about a yard long will do, but a wand of willow or hazel is supposed to possess magic properties.

Send a confederate out of the room, and ask one of the company to choose a spot on the floor, or carpet, which she will guess on her return. When she is recalled, point out various spots, asking, "Is it this?" or, "Is it that?" to which she will at first answer "No." When you point to the right one, she will answer "Yes," and the company will be much puzzled as to how she guessed it. They have been looking at the floor, but she has been looking at your hand. When you pointed to the wrong ones, you held the wand in your fist, as you would hold a poker. When you came to the right one

* For the *Western Messenger*.

you laid your index finger along the stick, pointing down at the spot *with that*.

We are surprised at the number of children who do not know the old and very familiar game, "He can do little who can't do this." It is played with the same wand, each player repeating the above words, emphasizing each by a rap on the floor with a stick. Some will lay particular stress on one word, some upon another, as "He can do *little* who—*can't* do *this*," the last three words being spoken more slowly than the others. While speaking, hold the wand in your right hand, then, *taking it in your left hand*, pass it to your left-hand neighbor, telling him to do exactly as you did. Perhaps he will imitate your words and gestures exactly, but ten chances to one he will not think to pass the wand *from one hand to the other*, which is the real secret. Perhaps the next player will know the secret, and speak in quite a different tone, "He—can—do—little who *can't* do *this*." "That is right," if he has only thought to make the change from the right hand to the left.

I.

CHARADE.

A chattering monkey,
A babbling brook,
With anticipations,
From the name of a book.

II.

HIDDEN PROVERB.

Oh, who will care for the little birds?
Their mother was killed to-day.
We must keep a watch o'er their nest awhile,
And drive every cat away.

(*Youth's Companion*.)

III.

RIDDLE.

In the spring I look gay
In my comely array,
In the summer more clothing I wear;
But, as colder it grows,
I fling off my clothes,
And in winter quite naked appear.
(*From an old Book of Riddles*.)

IV.

AN OLD PUZZLE.

What always grows in the winter, never grows in the summer, and grows with its roots upward?

V.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. When a man dreams that he is on the top of the cross on St. Paul's Cathedral, London, where is he really?

2. When a man dreams that he is one of the seven wise men of Greece what is he really?

3. When he dreams that he is travelling round the earth at the rate of one hundred and eighty miles an hour, what is he doing really?

4. When he dreams that he is on a brilliant planet, travelling through at the rate of several thousand miles a day, what is he doing really?

VI.

What book by a famous English writer is represented in the following line,—

W H - I - E

The Whole Family.

Answers to Puzzles in the March Number.

I.—Throwing light,—a pocket handkerchief.

II.—Jonah when inside of the whale.

III.—Canton.

IV.—Light gains make heavy purses.

V.—White (W-hit-e).

VI.—The window; for it is full of pains (panes), and we have all more than one window blind. The Dumb Waiter is an equally good answer.

MONTHLY REPORT.

The fifth regular meeting of the season was held at 25 Beacon Street, on Friday, March 3, with Miss Clarke in the chair. Thirty were present. The reports of the secretary and treasurer were read and approved.

The Library Committee reported that during February two libraries had been sent out, three names assigned, and that three new libraries are about to start. There are nineteen names on the waiting list.

Eighteen requests have now been received for the barrel of magazines that was offered to any one willing to pay freight charges. Twenty-two branches were represented, and three reported by letter. All are doing the usual good work. The Marlboro committee has had a chafing-dish supper, and in that way raised \$18 for Cheerful Letter work.

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11.55 o'clock.

BERTHA LANGMAID,

Secretary.

THE SINGING BIRDS.

The unauthorized slaughter of the birds begins with the Easter season. Now, with regard to the protection of singing birds, most of the Northern States are well provided if the enactment of a statute meant a great deal. At the instance of Senator Hoar and his constituents, the thirty-four varieties of singing birds in Massachusetts, our General Court here passed a stiff statute five years ago.

But the difficulty is, in our easy-going national life, that we leave these statutes to the general good will of the community; and we had rather ourselves pay \$5 a year to the Audubon Society, and let the Audubon Society hold a few annual meetings, than take care that a boy or man who goes out on Patriots' Day, with a gun over his shoulder, and returns with half a dozen robins in his bag, is arrested and sent to the House of Correction.

There are a thousand readers of these lines who will say it is a shame that the Italian pot-boilers, as they will call them, are murdering the birds. And yet, of the thousand, not one will intimate to the police force of his neighborhood that he wants such people arrested or will say or do anything to create a public opinion in this business.—*Edward Everett Hale.*

The Editor earnestly entreats all readers of the *Cheerful Letter* to do what they can to check this cruelty. At least each one of us can assist the cause by wearing no bird plumage as an ornament. We need not buy any plumage for a new bonnet, and what we have can be taken out.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Mr. T. F. Dillon, from Boxwood, North Carolina, to Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

Mrs. Sue Quisenberry, from Roanoke, Virginia, to Young's, Virginia.

Mrs. L. B. Hethcock, from 333 Park Avenue, Hot Springs, Arkansas, to 316 South Borden Street, Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Mrs. P. M. Hubbard, Little River Academy, North Carolina, to Kinnon, North Carolina.

Any one in New England who would care to receive several years of *The Homestead*, a farming journal (back numbers), may address Miss Bertha Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange on Friday, April 7, at 25 Beacon Street, at 10.30 A.M. All persons interested are cordially invited.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable. Do not offer odd numbers of periodicals, but send them directly to one of the many stations where they are acceptable.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

God dwells not only where, o'er saintly dust,
The sweet bells greet the fairest morn of seven:
Wherever simple folk love, pray, and trust,
Behold the house of God, the gate of heaven!

—*Frederick Langbridge.*

DIRECTIONS.

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—Miss Frances B. Fisher, 491 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.—Mrs. Charles T. Catlin, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks should be made payable to Mary Louise Catlin.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Mrs. Catlin at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Mrs. Catlin, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.